# CONSIDERATIONS

of present use concerning

# THE DANGER

Resulting from the

# CHANGE

OF OUR

# Church-Government.

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# CONSIDERATIONS OF PRESENT USE,

## concerning the danger reſulting from the change of our CHURCH-GOVERNMENT.

TO him that being ſatisfied in judgment of the *lawfulneſſe* of *Epiſcopall Government*, doth yet conceive that the parting with it is no *change* of *Religion*, and conſequently, that the ſtanding for it at this time, when it is oppoſed, is but the preferring the intereſts of ſome inconſiderable men before the conveniences and common wiſhes of all, I earneſtly deſire (in the bowells of compaſſion to my bleeding Country, and from a ſincere paſſionate wiſh that the *cure* of this dangerous wound may not be a *palliate imperfect cure*) to preſent ſome few ſad conſiderations, which I ſhall caſt under two heads (proportionable to the two parts of the former ungrounded ſuggeſtion) the one, *That parting with the preſent Government is no change of Religion*; the other, *That ſtanding for it at this time, is the preferring the intereſts of ſome before the common wiſh of all*, the peace of this Nation.

Concerning the former, I offer to conſideration, Firſt, whether the *Government* of the Church be not a conſiderable part of

*Religion*? That it is ſo, I ſhall make appeare by theſe reaſons. 1. That *Government* is as neceſſary to the *preſervation* of the Church as *Preaching* the Goſpell was to the *plantation* of it, and that therefore it was alwaies the Apoſtles practice, aſſoon as ever they had converted a City or Province, or any conſiderable number of men in it, to leave it in the hands of ſome faithfull Perſons, to *dreſſe*, and *tend*, and *water*, what they had thus *planted*; and therefore though it were *poſſible* for a *Chriſtian* to be deprived of this benefit, and yet to remaine *Chriſtian* (as to *want* ſome limbes, or to *abound* to monſtroſity in others, is yet reconcileable with *life* and *being* of a man) to retain the *doctrine* of Chriſtianity without any *Government*, to be a Chriſtian in the Wall or in the Wilderneſſe, a *Stylita* or *Anachorite* Chriſtian (in which caſe there is no doubt the *uſe* of the very *Sacraments*, inſtituted by Chriſt himſelfe, would not be *neceſſary* to *Chriſtianity*) yet would it be little leſſe then fury for any to deſigne or hope the *proſperity* or *duration* of a Church, or viſible ſociety of ſuch Chriſtians, without this grand *neceſſary* (though not of *ſingle being*, yet) of *mutuall preſervation*, this *principle* not of *eſſence* but of *continuance*, without which (it is the learned *Breerewoods* obſervation from St. *Auguſtine*) that the preſervation of a *Church* was once by *experience* found to be an *impoſſible* thing, no other engine being able to repaire the want or ſupply the *place* of that.

A ſecond reaſon may be drawn from the concurring *pleas* of all the moſt diſtant *pretenders* for the ſeverall Forms of Government in the *Church*, as well thoſe that have eſpouſed the *Papall*, the *Preſbyteriall*, the *Independent*, as thoſe which are for the preſent *Engliſh* Form by *the King and his Biſhops, &c.* all vehemently contending for the neceſſity of that Government, which they affect in the Church, and none ſo calme or modeſt in their claims, as the Aſſertors of the Engliſh Prelacy; which moderation or want of heat, is ſure one reaſon that ſo many ſons of this Church are now tempted to think Government ſo *unconſiderable* a thing, and ſo *extrinſecall* to Chriſtianity; though this thought thus grounded, be a double injuſtice. 1. In ſuſpecting that *truth*, for want of *aſſerting*, which is therefore not ſo vehemently *aſſerted*, becauſe it is ſuppoſed *truth*. 2. In encouraging *heat* and *violence*

*lence* of diſputers (the greateſt plague in a Church) by ſhewing them that the *Eagereſt* pretenders ſhall be moſt *heeded*, and that *meekneſſe ſhall not inherit the earth*, though both *David* and *Chriſt* promiſed it ſhould. A third argument may be had from the judgement of our *State*, which hath thought fit to make the *Government* of the Church matter of one of the *Articles of our Religion*, and ſo to joyn in honour the care of it with the care of the *Doctrine*, and to require as ſtrict a *ſubſcription* to the eſtabliſh't *Government*, as to the reſt of the 39. heads of *Doctrine*, by which you may evidently ſee, that to change the *Government* is to change the *Doctrine*, and where Doctrine and Government both are changed, can we poſſibly think the Religion to be the ſame? I ſhall add no more *Proofs* of this, becauſe I conceive them *unneceſſary*; the contrary miſapprehenſion being, as I ſuppoſe, not grounded by *Arguments*, but of it owne accord ariſing from an ἔμπειρία, *an experiment*, which many men, eſpecially *perſons of quality*, think they have made, that in their whole lives they never reaped any benefit from *Government*, never received any acceſſion or increaſe to their ſpirituall weal from that, as from the *Doctrine* and *Liturgie* of the Church, they acknowledge to have done. To this ground of miſpriſion, as being perhaps the τὸ αἴτιον τῆ ψεύδει, the cauſe of the whole miſtake, it will not be amiſſe to make ſome anſwer.

1. That many benefits we receive from *Government*, which we do not *viſibly diſcern*, and that therefore when we *diſcerne* our ſelves to have received ſome growth, and cannot but know that it was wrought by *meanes*, we ſhould rather confeſſe our want of *ſenſe* or gratitude to the *true means*, then imagine thoſe not to have been the *means*, onely becauſe we have not that *ſenſe* of them.

2. That thoſe meanes which have been more *viſible* to us, the diſpenſation of the Word and Sacraments, have been reacht out to us by the hand of *Government*, to which therefore we owe our acknowledgements in the ſecond place for our *preſervation* and *growth*, as to the hand of ſupreme providence for our *being* or *life* ſpirituall.

3. That if the *benefits of Government* have not been really very *diſcernible* and *notable to* all, that is not yet in any juſtice to be

imputed to any *defect* that way in Government it ſelfe, to any *barrennes* in the nature or particular temper of it, but to ſome *default* (which will deſerve obſerving and reforming) in the *Perſons*, either of the *Rulers*, or of *thoſe* which are *under rule*, or of a third ſort whoſe dutie it is to be the Rulers *Perſpectives* and *Otaconſticks*, to preſent to their knowledge, the wants of inferiours, which till they are *knowne*, are not likely to be *repaired*. The defaults in each of theſe ſeverals are, or may be, ſo many, and ſo obvious to common obſervation, that it will be much more reaſonable for each to reſolve to *amend* his part for the future, and ſo to make it a buſineſſe of *Reformation*, then to charge the defaults of perſons to the defaming of Government, and ſo to *undervalue* and *ſcorne* what our ſinnes firſt, then our phanſies have *defamed*.

The comfort is, that it hath been the *clemency* as well as the *ſloth* or *cowardice* of Governours, which have deprived men of the great fruits of Government; and if it may be agreed that it is very expedient, and will be taken in good part, that Governours hereafter be more *ſevere*, as well as more *diligent*, more *couragious*, as well as more *laborious*, in uſing the *Weapons of their warfare*, to *cut* off or to *cure*, without any reſpect of perſons, whereſoever there is need of them; I ſhall hope this objection will *then* be throughly anſwered, if as *yet* it be not.

A ſecond conſideration apportioned to the former head will be this, whether (ſuppoſing Government of the Church to be a conſiderable part of Religion) the change of it from eſtabliſhed Epiſcopacy to any other (namely to that of *Preſbytery* by many, without any *Superiour* over them, or as that is oppoſite to *Epiſcopacy*) be not a ſinne againſt *Religion*? That it is, or will be ſo, I ſhall endeavour to convince the *gainſayer* by theſe ſteps or degrees of proofe, which though perhaps not each ſingle, yet all being put together, will, I believe, where *prejudice* doth not hinder, be ſufficient to doe it.

1. Becauſe this Government by *Biſhops*, ſuperiour to *Preſbyters*, is of *Apoſtolicall inſtitution*. But this being an affirmation, as demonſtrable by Eccleſiaſticall Records, as any thing can be, or as the Canon of Scripture which we receive, is demonſtrated to be the Canon of Scripture; and in regard it hath by others been ſuffici-

sufficiently proved, I shall therefore wholly spare the repeating of that trouble, and adde unto it. 2. That it hath the *example*, though not the distinct precept of Christ, who with his twelve *Apostles*, and the many other *Disciples* in time of his residence upon Earth, superiour one to the other, are the copy, of which the *Bishops*, *Presbyters* and *Deacons* in the following age, were a transcript, who are therefore by S. *Ignatius*, S. *Johns Contemporary*, allowed to receive honour, the *Bishops* as *Christ*, the *Presbyters* as the *Apostles*, the *Deacons* as the *Seventy*. 3. That as farre as concernes *superiority* of one order to the other (which is sufficient to eject the Presbytery which supposes an ἰσοτιμία, or *equality* of all) it is authorized by sacred Scripture-practice, where it appeares, that when *Judas* fell from his orbe of motion, the *dignity* of being one of the twelve, is by the direction of the Spirit, Acts. 1. and by lot bestowed upon *Matthias*, who, though before a Disciple of Christ, was not till then assumed to that *dignity*. Fourthly, that supposing it to be in this manner *Apostolicall*, there is little colour of reason to doubt, but that the preserving of it is of as great moment as many *doctrines* of Christianity, not onely because many *doctrines* were not so *explicitely* delivered by Christ, but that they needed farther *explicating* by the *Apostles*, (and are therefore by the Church grounded not in any words of the *Gospell*, but in the *Epistles* of the *Apostles*) but also because it was in Gods *providence* thought fit that *Government* should be setled not by *Christ personally*, but by the Apostles, that is *mediately* by Christ; as doctrine was by Christ *immediately*. Christ in his life time gives them the ground of a Church, divine truth, the *word of his Father*, the acknowledgement of which is *the rock on which his Church is built*, on this the Apostles are to build, and gather members, and to settle the whole edifice καλὰ τάξιν, or *ordinately*, and that they may not erre in that work, the holy *Holy Ghost* is promised to *descend* upon them, and Christ by that power of his to be with them in eminent manner, εἰς συντέλειαν τοῦ αἰῶνος, *to the end of the World*. And *Government* being necessary to this setling, was undoubtedly thus referred and left to them by CHRIST, and so their Authority in instituting that which they instituted, as evidently deduced from CHRIST, as their power of *Preaching* what they preached, or *baptizing* whom they baptized. And having

ving gone thus farre, I cannot but resume my *consideration* thus farre made more *considerable*, and appeale to any sober conscience, whether it be not some irreligion thus to displace or remove that which the Apostles (to whom only by Christ it was intrusted) according to Christs owne Samplar and Scripture-grounds, thought fit to settle in the Church, supposing it to be a matter of Religion which is spoken of, as before we proved; nay, whether if an *Angell from Heaven* were to be *anathematized for teaching any other Doctrine then what* one Apostle had taught, it would not be matter of just *terr our* to any that should have any part in the guilt of instituting any other Government then that which the Apostles had instituted, especially when the acts of *Councells* tell us, that what S. *Paul* denounces against the *heterodox* Angell, the Church did practise against *Aerius*, anathematized him for impugning this Government, which now we speake of. And if still the Authority of all this be blemisht by this one *exception*, that this institution of the Apostles is not affirmed in *Scripture*, or there commanded to posterity to *continue*, and retain for ever.

To this I answer, by saying that which may be a fourth Argument to prove the irreligiousnesse of such change, That there is as much or more to be said (in both those respects, both for *mention* of this *institution in Scripture*, and for *Apostolicall precept for continuing* of it) for this *Government*, as for some other things whose change would be acknowledged very irreligious. I will only instance in one, the institution of the *Lords day*, of which there is no thing can be said to the setting up the *Authority* and *immutability* of it, which will not be said of *Episcopacy*. A *ground* of it there was *in nature*, some *Time* to be set a part to the speciall publique service of God; and the like *ground* there is *in nature* for this, that some *Persons* should be designed to, and rewarded for the speciall publique service of God. A *patterne* of that there was among the *Jewes*, one day in the seven designed for Gods *Quotum* or portion; the like *patterne* there is among the *Jewes* for this; a Government by *High-Priests*, *Priests*, and *Levites*. That was an institution not of *Christ* in his life time immediately, but of his *Apostles*, after his departure invested with such power; the like institution there is of this by the same *Apostles* after Christs

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Christs ascension, directed and assisted by the *holy Ghost*. The *occasion* of pitching on the first day of the weeke was a solemne action of Christ his *Resurrection* on that day; the *occasion* of this, the severall distinct orders in the Church in Christs time, *Christ*, *Apostles*, *Disciples*, and the manifest superiority of him before all of them (who affirmes himselfe their *Lord*, even when he speaks of his office ministeriall, his *coming to Minister to them*) and of the *Apostles* before the *Disciples*, as even now was shewed. The mention of that was found once in the *Revelation* distinctly, κυριακὴ, *the Lords day*, and twice or thrice in equipollent termes, *the first day of the week*; and the mention of Episcopacy is as cleare, *the Angell of the Church of Ephesus*, &c. in the *Revelation* (which hath beene cleared by irrefragable evidence to belong to this matter) and the *Ruling Elder* in S. *Paul*, that must have *double honour*, and *Titus left in Crete to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordaine Elders in every Church*; and many other more cleare mentions of the severall titles and offices of *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, and *Deacon*, then there is of the name and duties of the *Lords day*. The *obscure mentions* of that in Scripture were *explained* in the writings and Stories of the first age of the Church, particularly in the *Epistles* of *Ignatius*, and the *obscurities* of the Sacred Texts concerning *Episcopacy*, are as clearly *explicated* and unfolded by the same *Ignatius*, even in every one of those *Epistles* of his which *Vedelius* (as great an enemy of this Order as *Geneva* hath produced any) after his *fiery tryall* of that Author hath acknowledged to be his. *The use* of that continued from the *Apostles* time (though not universally till the *Jewish Sabbath* was fairly laid asleep) till these daies in the *universall Church*, and all *particular Churches*, that we read of; and the like use and practice of this continued *universally* without any exception from the *Apostles* time, till this day in the *universall Church*, as that signifies the *Eastern* and the *Western* Church, and in each particular Church, till about this last *Century*, and in this of ours from the plantation of the Gospell till this day. These are parallels enough to even the ballance (and I professe to know no one more which might weigh it down on that side) and to make it now seasonable to demand, whether it would not be thought an act contrary to Religion (whether that signifies Christian *Pie-*

*ty*, or *meekneſſe*, or *awe*, to all that is *Sacred*) for any particular nationall Church, or part thereof, without any more warrant then is now offered for this preſent change, to remove the ſervice of God from the *Lords day* to any other day in the weeke, (which ſure is as ſmall a difference, as that betwixt *Preſbyteriall* and *Epiſcopall* government can by any be conceived to be) or in ſtead of our *firſt day* of the week to ſet apart either an *eight*, or a *ſixt* day, and ſo to change that *Apoſtolicall inſtitution*. If *that* ſeem ſtrange, or be ſtartled at, as unfit to be ventured on, or yeelded to, I ſhall deſire the ſame plea may be entred for *this*, and that conſcience may be ſecured, that either both are lawfull, or that the difference is cleare, and the advantage on the *Lords daies* ſide, or that it may be reſolved that *this* is unlawfull as well as *that*.

A fift Argument will be this, That the making (or yeelding to) this change, will be a ſcandall (very worthy to be conſidered) in them that ſo *yeeld*, toward thoſe which *oppoſe* this Government as unlawfull; for this yeelding will be an appearing acknowledgement, that their contrary pretentions are true, and ſo a confirming them in their *errour* (which is no light one, but the ſame for which *Aerius* was, and any other oppoſer would certainly have been anathematized, and turned out of the *Catholique* Church for an *Heretick*,) which is one ſpeciall kind of *Scandalizing* or occaſioning the fall of our Brethren, and withall a nouriſhing them in their *unchaxitable opinion* not only of us, but of the ancient Fathers of the Church, (who were all *Antichriſtian* if this be ſo) which is another *cauſing my Brother to offend*: nay a kind of countenancing that *unchriſtian* (am ſure *unproteſtant*) *Doctrine*, of the lawfulneſſe of *taking up Arms*, againſt lawfull Superiours and eſtabliſht Lawes, and propagating our opinions in Religion by that means, which perchance ſome may be betrayed to by this *example*, others brought to believe conſentaneous to *Proteſtant Doctrine*, if they which are thus guilty be thus gratified; which as it were a *change* in our *Doctrine*, if it were *really acknowledged*, ſo is it, in this reſpect, another act of *Scandall*, if it thus *appeare* to be *acknowledged*, and that which would make any Heathen Prince unwilling to embrace our Religion, if this diſloyall perſwaſion were conceived to be a part of it.

A ſixt Argument (which to me is of no ſmall force) I will yet but name, and referre it to others to conſider of, That no man is a Prieſt, or lawfully ordained Miniſter of any Chriſtian Church, but he that is *called* and *ſent* by *God*; that there is now no way in this Kingdome, to have that *calling* or *miſſion* duly, but from *Biſhops*, who are the only perſons who have their power of Ordaining others, *given* to them in their aſſumption to that Order, by thoſe who had it before, and can derive it from the *Apoſtles*, who had it *immediately* from *Heaven*: and whatſoever other power a *Prieſt*, or *Preſbyter* may be thought or ſaid to have common with a Biſhop, it is yet the conſtant judgement of the univerſall Church, for 1500. yeares, that this of Ordination is not competible to one or more *bare Preſbyters* without a *Biſhop*, and it will be eaſie to ſatisfie any reaſonable man in whatſoever may be produced of ſound, or probability to the contrary: and therefore if any Office, or Order, or Miniſtry in the Church be conſiderable, this which is the ſtanding well-head and ſpring of all the other, muſt be thought ſo alſo.

Having premiſed theſe Arguments of ſo much weight, ſufficient to ſupport the burthen deſigned to them, I ſhall add, *ex abundanti* ſome inferiour ones (though they amount not ſo farre, as alone of themſelves to conclude it direct irreligion, yet to adde to the former heap ſome aggravations. As,

1. That to yeeld to this change, is to *diſclaime* thoſe bleſſed means of Gods *providence* which brought us to our Baptiſme, to all our ſpirituall life and growth that we have attained to, and that is a great ingratitude to that Government.

2. It is an act of *pride* and *inſolency*, to prefer any ſcheme of *humane* and *modern* invention before that which the *Apoſtles*, the *Primitive*, and (for ſo many yeares) the *Univerſall Church* had authorized & therefore I could almoſt adventure to believe, that the framers of the *Covenant* had obliged themſelves ſecretly to maintain Epiſcopacy by putting in thoſe words, [*the beſt Reformed Churches*] that I might eſcape thinking them ſo *inſolent* as to prefer any Churches before thoſe which they cannot but know have uſed *Epiſcopacy*.

3. It is a great *tempting of Gods providence*, in not being contented with that Forme which hath proſpered ſo happily with

us, and the whole Christian World, (though subject) as all that is humane, or mixt with flesh, is, even the very grace of God in us) to be abused) and putting it to the adventure, whatsoever inconveniences the next may be subject to. Of the *inconveniencies* that Presbyterie doth infallibly bring along with it, and the *irreconcileablenesse* of them with *Monarchicall Government* in the State, sufficient evidences have been given; and if there were no other but this, that the endeavouring to bring it in at this time hath brought this tempest and *misque* upon this Kingdome, and that this hath been but the generall consequent of that Government wheresoever it hath but begun to heave, casting out Peace, and obedience to lawfull authority together, it would well deserve to have this marke of reprobation or non-election set upon it, if it were but for this, that the prosperity of such attempts should not encourage others to the like. This and the like inconveniences are of such weight, that for men to be willing to exchange the *certain* benefits of the one, for the *uncertain* advantages and strongly-probable calamities of the other is a sin, that may *provoke* and *tempt* God to punish them yet further with greater and unexpected curses, and therefore may deserve in its place to be considered.

4. It is an Act of *infidelity* and practicall *Atheisme* (for those especially who being convinced with the former reasons to acknowledge any irreligion or sin in such change) to sacrifice any thing to our own present conveniences, to make any change in sacred matters, meerly out of intuition of our own secular advantages; *Atheisme*, in thinking that God cannot as easily blast that convenience so acquired, as those many which came more directly to our hands; and *infidelity*, or *distrust*, in thinking that God will not in his time give those conveniences and advantages (if they be such indeed) by means perfectly *lawfull*, which now we covet by *unlawfull*. To which might be added the wants and omissions of those duties of *confession of Christ*, in not defending and standing to those truths which we are convinced to be such, in time of their being oppugned and persecuted; *self-denyall*, in not depositing our own carnall secular aimes and interests, and *of taking up the Crosse*, in not suffering willingly and cheerfully when it lyes in our way to the performing of any act of

of obedience to Christ. But I would not inlarge to these, but only conclude this proofe with a fift *difficulty* of separating *sin* from *changes*, when they are great, and in matters of weight: It is the wisemans advice that occasioned this observation, *My Sonne, feare thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them which are given to changes*: The changes are sure changes in Government, and those are named indefinitely, without any *restraint*, and the very *medling* with them *that are inclined to* such, is opposed both to Piety and Loyalty, *Fearing of God and the King*.

I have done with the considerations proportioned to the first part of the suggestion. I proceed to the view of the second part of it, and there the consideration shall be only this, whether,

The change of this Government, be not a *common interest of all*, as well as of those who are *now Clergy men*. That it is so, may appeare probable, because the *revenue or honours* which belong to them in Government are not the sole, or main part of *Government*; there is a *weight* and *office*, which our fore-fathers thought worthy to be *encouraged* and *rewarded* with those payments, and if any man shall thinke them ill proportioned, I shall not doubt to tell him S. *Chrysostomes* judgement, *that the burthen of a Bishop was formidable, even to an Angell to undergo*, and if the corruptions of latter times be affirmed to have changed that state of things, I answer; that the restoring Episcopacy to its due *burthen* as well as *reputation*, were a care worthy of reformers, and it is so farre from my desire that any such care should be spared, that it is now my publike solemne Petition both to God and man, that the *power of the keyes*, and the exercise of that power, the due use of *confirmation*, and (prævious to that) examination, and tryall of youth, a strict search into the manners and tempers, and sufficiencies of those that are to be admitted into holy *Orders*, and to be licentiate for *publique Preachers*, the *visitation* of each parish in each Diocesse, and the exercise of Church-discipline upon all offenders; together with *painfull*, mature and sober *Preaching* and *Catechizing*, studies of all kinds, and parts of Theologicall Learning, Languages, Controversies, Writings of the Schooles and Casuists, &c. be so farre taken into consideration by our Law-makers, and so far considered in the collating of Church-preferments and dignities, so much of Duty required of

Clergie-men, and ſo little left *arbitrary* or *at large*, that every Church-*preferment* in this Kingdome may have ſuch a due *burthen* annexed to it, that no *ignorant* perſon ſhould be *able*, no *lazy* or *luxurious* perſon *willing* or *forward* to undergoe it. And if this might be thus deſigned, I ſhould then reſolve, that the direct conrrary to the fore-mentioned ſuggeſtions would be truth, that the ſetling and continuing of this preſent *Government* would prove the *common intereſt* of all, and onely the *burthen* of thoſe *few* that have thoſe painfull offices aſſigned them; and leaſt any may think this word a *boaſt* (which I can ſafely venture with the world at this time, and not have reaſon to feare a *ſurpriſall*, or being taken at my word) I ſhall venture another offer in the name of my brethren of the Clergie; (not that I have tooke their particular Votes, but that I perſwade my ſelfe ſo farre of their Piety.) That rather then the *Glory* ſhould thus *depart from Iſrael*, by the Philiſtims *taking the Arke of the Lord*, laying waſt this flouriſhing Church of ours, or transforming it into a new guiſe, every one ſingle of us, that have any poſſeſſions or titles worthy any mans envy or rapine, and ſo are thought now by our owne intereſts to have been bribed or fee'd Advocates in this cauſe, may forthwith be deprived of all that part of the Revenues of the Church wherein we are legally inveſted; and he that ſhall not cheerfully reſigne his part in the *preſent* proſperity of the Church, on the meer contemplation and intuition of the *benefit* that may now, and *after his life* redound to *others*, let him have the guilt of *Achans wedge* laid on him, and the charge of being diſturber of the State. I hope we have *learnt* to *want as well as to abound*, and to truſt God (that can *feed* the *young Ravens* when the old have expoſed them) for the feeding of us, and our families, though all our preſent means of doing it were taken from us. If this may ſerve turne to ſatisfie the *thirſt* of thoſe that *gape*, and the ſuſpicions of thoſe that *looke unkindly* on us, we offer to free you from all blame of *Sacrilege*, or *oppreſſion*, or *injuſtice* (from one of which, no other means imaginable can free a *change* of Government) by our owne voluntary *Ceſſion* or *reſignation*, as farre as our perſonall intereſts reach: and ſhall thinke the peace of this State, and continued proſperity of this Church, a moſt *glorious* purchaſe, moſt *cheaply* bought, if it be had upon

ſuch

such termes as these. And if the Function it selfe, with the necessary adjuncts to it, be not swept away in the calamity, we shall be perfectly pleased whatsoever befall our *Persons*, and desire, that tryall may be made of the *Ingenuity* of Clergy-men, whether we have not thus farre *profited* under *Gods rod*, as to be willing to yeeld to any possible proposition (which will bring no guilt of sin upon our consciences) toward the averting the judgments of Heaven, which are now (I wish I might say *for our sinnes onely*) most sadly multiplyed upon this Land.

FINIS.